

disguised sinners. This presents the most painful manifestation of the power of sin to deceive and pervert and debase the soul of man.

The greatest danger to which the better class of people in our country is exposed, is that of resting satisfied with being "almost" Christians. Are any of the readers of these pages "almost persuaded," yet holding back? Have not some been in this condition long? If so, will you take warning now? Christ is not far from you—and you purpose to seek Him yet.—What if your reasons for delay till this hour should become more numerous and stronger? Almost ready to follow the Saviour, as you think, what if you should be cast away at last?

An old man lay a dying once. In common with many, he had felt a reluctance about making his will, and delayed to the last. According to that absurd and iniquitous statute—the law of primogeniture—when a man dies intestate, the eldest son, to the exclusion of more helpless members of the family, becomes inheritor of all. He had three daughters who had been a comfort to him, and one son for whom he trembled. He saw his neglect, and thought of the suffering he might thereby entail upon his orphan girls, and the temptation he might present to their erring brother to defraud and do them wrong; and he endeavored now to make amends for his oversight while yet there was time. In haste the instrument was prepared, by which he devised his property to his children, apportioning a competency for each. All was about ready, just his signature or assent was wanted; but death, that would not wait a little longer, unnerved his arm and drove expression from his face. His worst forebodings were realized. The son grasped all, and soon after expelled his sisters from their home. The will was almost completed that would have given them a legal right to their shares of the father's property, and saved them from the miseries of penury. What was the value of the "almost" to them? It only lent additional pangs to their heavy sorrows. So the man "almost" a Christian, may have the covenant almost made between his soul and Christ, but he hankers over some besetting sin, some be-

loved idol, he delays, hoping for a more convenient season, waiting for a mightier spiritual impulse; the deed is yet unsealed, when death steps in unannounced, and that soul is portionless for ever!

A poor man left his native land, with his wife and children, and all that they had, to seek a home in this country, expecting to better his circumstances and provide sufficiently for those dear to him, which hitherto he had failed to do by constant toil. They safely crossed the ocean, and looked, and trod upon the land of promise, and anticipated bright and happy days. But just when danger and disappointment were dreaded no more, when the family was in safety on the steamer that was to convey them through our inland waters to their new home, the father ran up to the town on a little errand. The steamer's bell rang, he heard it, and hastened to return—the bell rang again, and he ran faster. He reached the dock, but the boat started, and everything seemed placed in his way—still the boat hardly moves, he gets to the edge of the wharf, thinks he can do it, and leaps. He miscalculated the distance and his strength.—His anxious wife touched his hand as 't caught at the vessels side, and that was the last touch of two warm hands belonging to two true and loving hearts. He sank in the deep waters, and a widow and fatherless children were left in a strange land to the mercies of a cold world. They were *almost* at their destination.—He was *almost* on board. What was the value of *almost* to them? It made the sudden sad bereavement a more stunning calamity—it gave the exquisite sharpness to the afflictive stroke.

So the best possible advantage the being "almost" a Christian can secure for you in that world to come, to which we are all hastening, may be a sight of heaven's gate, and of others entering in, and safe for ever. You may see father and mother, wife and husband, son and daughter, sister and brother there, and you yourself excluded—the door shut against you! You may hear the despairing cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us," and know that you are included among those to whom the reply is given, "Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity." Your names are not found written in the book of life.